

ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
February 5, 2026

51 Winburn Way - Siskiyou Room - 4:30-6:00PM

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:32PM

Present were committee members John Tyler, Sean Smith, Catherine Greenspan, Emily Simon, and Allison Mendel
Also present was council liaison Gina DuQuenne and staff liaison Kerrick Gooden

1. Land Acknowledgment - We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work- the Ikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We denounce the egregious acts of the colonizers and government and recognize the horrific impacts that still exist today. We honor the first stewards in the Rogue Valley and the lands we love and depend on: Tribes with ancestral lands in and surrounding the geography of the Ashland Watershed include the original past, present and future indigenous inhabitants of the Shasta, Takelma and Athabaskan people. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha - "Where the Crow Lights" - that is now the Ashland City Plaza

Tyler read the land acknowledgment

2. Labor Acknowledgment - We also pause to recognize and acknowledge the labor upon which our country, state, and institutions are built. We remember that our country is built on the labor of enslaved people who were kidnapped and brought to the U.S. from the African continent and recognize the continued contribution of their survivors. We also acknowledge all immigrant labor, including voluntary, involuntary, trafficked, forced, and undocumented peoples who contributed to the building of the country and continue to serve within our labor force. We acknowledge all unpaid care-giving labor. To the people who contributed this immeasurable work and their descendants, we acknowledge their indelible mark on the space in which we gather today. It is our collective responsibility to critically examine these histories, to repair harm, and to honor, protect, and sustain their contribution to our society.

Smith read the labor acknowledgment

II. Approval of Minutes from 1.8.2026 Meeting

1. Approval of Minutes from 1.8.2026 meeting

Tyler moved to approve the minutes. Greenspan seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion passed.

III. Public Forum

none

IV. Unfinished Business

1. Belonging Survey - Status update, discussion, and next steps (5 min.)

The committee discussed how to analyze survey responses. Gooden has downloaded the results, which had 351 responses. The committee requested Gooden to send the data to committee members and Smith agreed to collate and draft a report on the data for review by the committee. The committee also reflected on how the survey was distributed outside direct community engagement efforts. The committee asked Gooden to find out where the press releases went and report back so the committee can understand and reflect on the survey's distribution for any future efforts.

2. SERJAC Social Event - ideas for discussion and planning

The committee decided to table this idea until the next regular meeting and to add the topic of committee member recruitment as an ongoing issue.

Discussion included: whose role it is to recruit members to advisory committees, what barriers might be to participation (potential assumptions that one needs to be a BIPOC community member to serve), and that social justice is important work for everyone despite race. The committee considered drafting a letter to the editor of Ashland-News outlining a call to service. Greenspan agreed to work on a first draft. The committee asked Gooden to distribute to the committee at-large for revision suggestions when ready.

V. Liaison Updates and Reports

1. Update from current liaison assignments:
Greenspan – Planning Commission (no report expected due to joint session)

Tyler – Climate and Energy Policy Advisory Committee?

Simon – Public Arts Advisory Committee?

Mendel – Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee - Mobile Home Park issues (15-20 min.)

Smith -- Parks (5 min.)

Smith -- CoCoConvo (5 min.)

Committee chairs requested to know about potential updates from committee liaisons ahead of regular meetings to best prepare time allotment for agenda items. Gooden will send out reminders to the committee at-large in an effort to support chairs with the goal to publish agendas a week ahead of regular meetings.

Mendel reported on the joint session between HHSAC, Planning, and Council regarding mobile home park zoning. Mobile home parks do not currently have a unique zoning class, but exist within other zones such as commercial or residential. Related issues were discussed, including how recreational vehicles (RV's) might be permitted and/or defined, and divergent interests between land owners and residents.

Greenspan reported there was indeed a meeting, but had nothing substantial to report.

Tyler had nothing to report.

Simon reported that PAAC discussed OSF's upcoming production and will be connecting on March 21, 2026 to discuss the Railroad Playwrights Plaque with those that will be in town with the production:

A Raisin in the Sun

March 15 – July 19, 2026

Angus Bowmer Theatre

By **Lorraine Hansberry**

Directed by **Tim Bond**

Smith reported that Parks Commission elected Bachman as its new Chair -SERJAC may be interested in it's discussion regarding accessibility related to the Winburn Way project which includes ADA access improvements at the Japanese Gardens. The committee discussed a recommending an opening/celebration for this to promote/celebrate ADA access.

Smith also reported on the discussion at the Commissions and Committees Conversations (CoCoConvo) meeting of Chairs. Topics of interest included access issues at 2200 street, what to do with land around the building, and impact on neighbors; the upcoming Equitable Housing Plan and Social Service Grants with HHSAC; the Winburn Way project with Parks; the Electrify Ashland initiative with CEPAC; and consideration of a round-about on B street at 4th street by TAC.

2. Update from ELEA subcommittee (15 min.)

No update to report. The subcommittee is in the beginning process of assessing the history of ELEA changes over time before inviting O'Meara and Neiswander provide perspective. The committee decided to move this forward as a working group rather than having it as an official subcommittee.

VI. New Business

1. Pioneer Hall - Discussion regarding equitable use (10 min.)

This topic was brought forward out of concern community meals would not be allowed. The committee learned that Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice returned to Pioneer Hall with Peace Meals in serving food and providing warmth for anyone in need at 3:30 p.m. Thursdays until April as reported in Ashland-News.

2. Discussion - regional ICE activity - should SERJAC issue any recommendations to Council? (10 min.)

The committee discussed suggestions for updating the resource list on the city's website in terms of local agencies working on this. Tyler and Simon volunteered to work on reviewing the site and drafting an update for committee review to include other resources such as UNETE, Northwest Seasonal Workers Association, and Coalicion Fortaleza.

A. Current resources from City of Ashland website:

<https://ashlandoregon.gov/1168/Immigration-Resources>

VII. Ongoing or Future Items for Consideration

1. Equitable Housing Plan working group

No update as this joint committee working group has not met yet - pending direction from HHSAC.

VIII. Announcements and Events

The committee discussed the success and robust attendance at the MLK Jr. Day celebration. Gooden also announced an upcoming land justice event opportunity sponsored by Vesper Meadow Education Program:

[Vesper Meadow Education Program](#)

The Path to Justice: Tribal Voices on Land Back

Thursday, February 19, 2026

2:00 PM 4:00 PM

Virtually over Zoom ([map](#))

[Google Calendar ICS](#)

Join us for a 2 hour educational panel discussion with Tribal voices on how to meaningfully engage in land justice for Tribal communities.

1. **Building Short Bridges**
Sunday, February 8, 2026 @ 3:00-4:30pm
Ashland Public Library
410 Siskiyou Blvd (Gresham Room)
[Here is more information from Ashland Together](#)
2. **Choosing Courage**
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 @ 6:30-8:00pm
SOU Recital Hall
450 S. Mountain Avenue
[Here is more information from Ashland Together](#)
3. **BASE Second Annual Fundraising Gala**
Saturday, February 28, 2026 @ 6:00-9:00pm
Ashland Hills Hotel and Convention Center
2525 Ashland Street
[Here is more information from Ashland Together](#)

IX. Adjournment to March 5, 2026 meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58pm